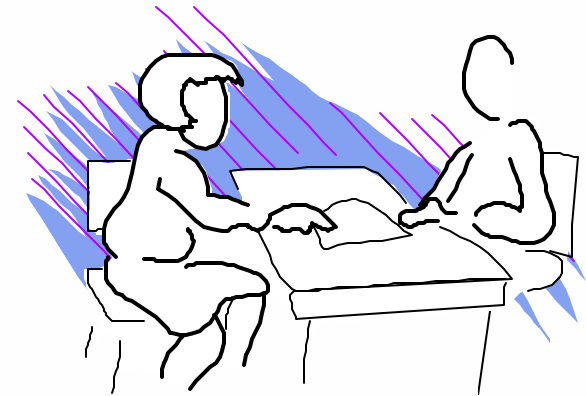


The Interview

- Every step in the job hunting process leads to getting **an interview**.
- A potential employer uses the interview to decide if you are right for the job.
- The more you know about interviewing, the better prepared you will be to show that you are the best candidate.



Successful Interviewing

- **Make a positive impression**
 - First Impression is extremely important
 - Dress appropriately. See [Do's and Don'ts of Clothing & Grooming](#).
- **Prepare thoughtful questions and answers**
 - Review [Questions your Interviewer Might Ask](#) and practice trial runs with a close friend
- **Ask questions that show interest in the job or the company**
 - Company Research is essential in this situation
 - [List of Questions you Might Ask an Interviewer](#)
- **Follow-up interview effectively with letter or thank-you note**
 - This is an extremely important step in communicating with the interviewer. Don't consider the interview complete until you send a follow-up letter.

Types of Interviews

The “Type of Interview” you have depends on who conducts it. Since different people within the company may approach interviewing differently, it pays to know what to say in each situation.



Interview Matrix

Screening	Face-to-Face	Group	Informal	Structured	Panel	Situational	Hiring
Usually a phone call top screen applicants	Traditional person to person interview in same location	Candidate is put with other team members to see how interact and respond to common situations	Non-formal setting – lunch, park, lobby area	AKA: The checklist interview	Several interviewers ask questions	Candidate is put to the task – either literally or hypothetically	Time to finally talk money
You are asked a series of questions to screen you from a larger pool	Opportunity to make a personal connection.	Leaders & team player type personalities emerge-opportunity to understand group dynamic	Relaxed interview style	Candidate responds to set list of questions	Often made up of team members	Lets interviewer see the candidate in action	Purpose is to make offer to candidate
Don't bother with self-promotion here	Make favorable first impression	Play nice with the other kids!	Intended to bring out candidate's personality	Little room for spontaneity	Each person asks set of questions	Rely on confidence in your skills to get you through it	Don't Blow This One! You're close!
Usually conducted from HR department	Pay attention to clothing & grooming		Be relaxed and keep conversation light	Answer questions thoughtfully	Stay relaxed and positive		Don't be afraid to negotiate
Little or no warning			Be prepared to talk about hobbies, clubs, volunteer activities, school interests		Respond to each person with the same respect		Be polite
					You never know who has the deciding hiring vote		Express gratitude
							Deal is not final until you've signed acceptance offer

The First Impression

- **Arrive on time – at least 15 min before interview.**
 - Arriving late may give the impression that you do not care about getting the job.
 - Is it a preview of your work habits?
- **Be courteous and friendly to everyone you meet.**
 - Receptionists and secretaries are often asked their impression of job candidates.
 - You never know who has the deciding vote to hire you.
- **Have a positive attitude.**
 - This is one of the most important insights into your personality.
 - A positive attitude will give you an edge over other candidates
 - Smile!!

Do's and Don'ts of Clothing & Grooming

Do

Moderately conservative business wear

Men: blue, gray, charcoal solid or pinstripe suits; long-sleeve light colored solid shirt; dress shoes; coordinating belt and shoes

Women: wear conservative colors with moderate heels or flats, not open toe; skin-tone hosiery

Carry only what you need

Brush hair & teeth; be clean-shaven; have a general well-groomed appearance



Don't

Make a fashion "statement"

Men: Wear brown, black or another color

Women: Wear mini skirts

Wear summer colors in the winter or vice versa

Eat garlic or onions right before the interview

Wear jewelry, make-up or nail polish that may be distracting



Answer Questions Effectively

- **Anticipate questions the interviewer will ask**
 - Try to determine what the questions may be based on the type of position.
 - See [Questions Your Interviewer Might Ask](#)
- **Prepare and practice answers**
 - Be prepared to talk clearly about your abilities and accomplishments. Be able to relate your skills to a variety of situations.
 - Keep answers thorough but brief.
- **Be believable**
 - Maintain eye contact with the interviewer.
 - Don't let your answers sound like you memorized them right before the interview.
- **Have a positive attitude**
 - Don't down-talk your previous employer, professors, or schools
 - Show that you focus on the positive aspects of conflict, like solving problems

Questions Your Interviewer Might Ask

Question	Suggested Response
Tell me about your professional experience.	Keep your answer brief. Emphasize diversity. Don't appear narrow or specialized. The interviewer will ask for more detail, if needed.
Name three accomplishments you are most proud of.	Be ready with some good examples; stress how your accomplishments helped others on your team, especially your employer.
What do you know about our company?	Research pays off. Do the research before the interview and this should be an easy question. Try to convey that you are aware of where the company fits into the big picture of it's industry.
Name 3 things you like about your job and 3 things you don't like.	Accentuate the positive and minimize the negative. Good examples of negatives include limited growth opportunity, desire for more challenging work, maturing priorities that necessitate a career change.
Tell me about ... (open ended question)	This question is designed to keep you from simply answering "yes" or "no." Be prepared to explain something briefly.

Questions Your Interviewer Might Ask

Question	Suggested Response
Have you ever had more work than you could finish? How did you handle it?	You resolved this common problem in the past by setting priorities and negotiating new terms for deadlines.
How long would it take you to make a contribution here?	Offer a hypothetical situation and accomplishment based on prior experiences. Be realistic.
What salary are you looking for?	Never talk salary during an interview! If you get this question, simply ask what the pay range is and say that your goal is to be within that range.
What skills have you improved the most in the last 2 years?	This question aims at getting you to admit to a shortcoming and show how you overcame it. Plus it exposes your most recent learning experiences.
Tell me about one of biggest mistakes.	Have an example ready and show how you learned from your mistake. Take ownership of it by admitting to it but show how you learned from it.
Why do you want this job?	Stay general; emphasize that you researched the company and were impressed with it's management.

Questions Your Interviewer Might Ask

Question	Suggested Response
What do you think you could contribute to this firm?	Be ready match your skills to the company's needs.
What style of management is do you work with best?	Don't name a single style, but stress that you are flexible and adaptive to any style
What qualities do you like in a boss?	If possible, reflect the qualities of the interviewer; otherwise say that you prefer a supportive manager that sets a positive example and gives you new challenges.
Where do you see yourself in 5 years?	Stress that you expect to be in the same job for the 5-year period and hopefully at this company.
Why did you leave a previous position?	Maintain positive attitude about previous employers. If bad parting, say how you could have made things better and stress how you have grown as a result.
Why do you change jobs so often?	Stress that you have learned much from a progression of positions and that you are seeking a more permanent position with this company.

Your Turn to Ask Questions

- **Usually, the candidate is given the opportunity ask questions near the end of the interview.**
 - Let the interviewer control the questioning until it is clear that your turn has come to ask questions.
- **This is your chance to make a great impression by showing your knowledge of the company**
- **Ask questions that show interest in the job or the company**
 - Company Research is essential in this situation
 - Be able to ask specifics about recent business performance or major business events
 - Shows that you did your homework and know a little about the company – may put you ahead of other candidates that did not do their homework

Questions You Might Ask the Interviewer

Question	Why You Want to Ask It
How many people work in this department?	This helps see where the department fits into the overall organization.
How do you see the company developing over the next few years?	To see what an insider has to say about the company's growth opportunities.
Where would I fit into the organization?	Get a better understanding of your job title and where you fit into the organization relative to other employees.
Where Why did my predecessor leave?	To see if this position has a problem with growth, since many people leave jobs to seek better opportunities, you may draw a conclusion that this position was not rewarding enough for predecessors
How long has this position been open?	If previous interviewees rejected the position, there may be a cause to reevaluate an offer.
How many people have had this position in the last 3 years?	This may reveal that this position has been difficult to succeed in.

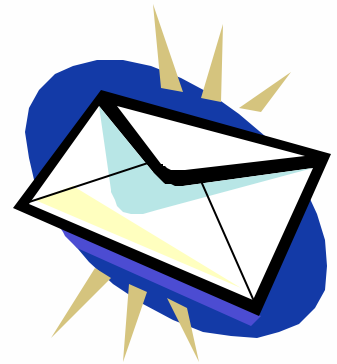
Questions You Might Ask the Interviewer

Question	Why You Want to Ask It
How many people have been promoted from this position during the last 3 years?	Helps see if the job is a good entry level with potential for advancement.
What would some of my priorities be, if you hire me?	Clarify many of the real tasks for the job, not just the vague descriptions of the position.
Why did you join this company? How long? Why stay?	This will reveal the interviewers level of satisfaction with the company.
What training opportunities will I have, if you hire me?	Training opportunities is a great insight into the value a company places on its employees. It is especially important for the recent graduates entering the work force.
Is there a formal job description? Ask to see it?	Gives you a better understanding of the position. Sometimes when recruiters are wooing you, they may embellish the duties to make a minor position sound like a major one.

It Ain't Over Till The Letter Hits the Mailbox

Interview Follow-up

- Take good notes & refer back to them when writing follow-up correspondence
- Send a courtesy Thank-you note immediately after the interview, even if you are not sure you want the job
- **Follow-up Letter** (mail 2 days after interview)
 - Show you are interested in the job
 - Point out the matches between you and the position
 - Include past related experiences
 - Let them know they can call you for more information
- **Follow-up call** (4 days after interview)
 - Shows continued interest in the job
 - Try to arrange a second meeting or interview



Follow-up Letter

Example of a follow-up cover letter

Ibey A. Graduate

123 Home Street, Hometown, TN 12345
(444) 555-6666 • lgraduate.mymail.com

December 1, 2001

Max Hire
Director of Accounting
Accounting Corporation of America (ACA)
10 Industry Street
Anytown, TN 12345

Dear Mr. Hire,

I want to thank you for taking the time to interview me Tuesday for the accounting clerk position and for the tour of your Anytown office.

It was especially useful to meet the managers and staff and to learn about your various departments and work environment. I was genuinely impressed with your accounting systems auditing processes. They seem very progressive and well-run.

After talking to you and your staff and learning the needs to be met by the entry accounting position, I think I would fit your needs well. I have a strong academic background in accounting and auditing theory and my past experience in financial services and my auditing internship round out my skills with real world application of my education. I like the idea of being able to make a contribution to your team right away.

Feel free to contact my prior Boss at Acme Financial Services, Linda Smith, about my past experience and work habits. Her number is (444) 555-7777.

I am very interested in this position and look forward to speaking with you about it again. I will call you in a few days to discuss a possible future with ACA. Thank-you again for your time.

Sincerely,

Ibey Graduate

Thank the person for their time, interest, tour, etc.

Mention something that impressed you about their offices or operations.

Reflect on discussion of position and emphasize how your skills and experience will fit their needs.

Discuss references, next meeting and follow-up telephone call.